

At the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), the interdisciplinary, holistic, patient-centered approach to care for patients with co-morbid traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health (PH) conditions, focuses on optimum healing (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) and utilizes more than 16 different disciplines. One of these disciplines is Neuropsychology, which is a field of Psychology that aims to understand how the structure and function of the brain relates to specific psychological processes by attempting to study, assess, understand and treat behaviors directly related to brain function.

The Role of the Neuropsychology Program at the NICoE

At the NICoE, a team of Clinical Neuropsychologists and Neuropsychology technicians conduct clinical interviews with the service members in their first week to evaluate and gather information about their medical and emotional history and complete an assessment of their cognitive functioning. The NICoE Clinical Neuropsychology team helps patients by identifying influences on their cognitive symptoms and finding ways to minimize those factors in order to optimize functioning.

Program Benefits

In order to assess the extent of impairment on a service member's particular cognitive skill and in an attempt to determine the area of the brain which may have been damaged following a traumatic brain injury (TBI), the NICoE's Neuropsychology team administers a large battery of tests, both computer-based and traditional, in areas of attention, memory, language, reasoning and motor skills. The team identifies unexpected influences on cognition and recommends ways to make improvements to service members based on these findings.

A large benefit of the NICoE is that the four-week outpatient program allows for the Neuropsychology team to really get to know the patient and engage them in testing that may not be otherwise possible. This allows the team to establish a rapport with the patients and helps ease any anxiety that might go along with being tested. Test validity can be a large issue in neuropsychological assessments; the length of the NICoE care program allows for tests to be rescheduled if the service member is suffering from acute pain, emotional factors, or other issues that might distract them from accurate testing. This gives the service member the opportunity to engage in testing at the optimal time.

While Neuropsychology is just one piece of the NICoE care puzzle, the initial evaluation in conjunction with the rest of the interdisciplinary care team, helps empower service members to achieve long-term balance.

To refer a patient to the NICoE, please visit our website at <http://www.nicoe.capmed.mil/> to complete a referral form.

Cognitive Symptoms Can Affect a Service Member's:

- Sensory Perception
- Motor Functions
- Attention
- Memory
- Auditory and Visual Processing
- Language
- Problem Solving
- Planning
- Organization
- Speed of Processing
- Many other facets of their lives